



DISCOURSE

BEFORE

THE SOCIETY

FOR

Propagating the Gospel

AMONG THE

INDIANS AND OTHERS IN NORTH AMERICA.

DELIVERED NOV. 7, 1805.

—:~::~~:—
BY JOSEPH ECKLEY, D.D.
MINISTER OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH IN BOSTON.
—:~::~~:—

Boston:

PRINTED BY E. LINCOLN, WATER STREET.

1806.

BOSTON, Nov. 7, 1805.

*At a meeting of the Society for propagating the Gospel among the
Indians, and others, in North America,*

VOTED, That the **PRESIDENT, Hon. Gen. LINCOLN, Rev. Dr. ELIOT,** and the **SECRETARY,** be a Committee to present the thanks of the Society to the **Rev. Dr. ECKLEY,** for his excellent Discourse, delivered before them this day, and to ask a copy of it for the press.

JEDIDIAH MORSE, Secretary.

THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF RECONCILIATION THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

A
DISCOURSE.

COLOSSIANS i. 20.

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

THE Society, at whose request I now address you, my christian friends, solicits your assistance in a cause, confessedly of the highest importance. You often assemble that you may minister to the temporal wants of your afflicted and poor brethren. This day you are convened, in the sanctuary of the Lord, to enjoy the satisfaction, and participate in the honour of ministering to the necessities of their *souls*;—of sending the message of salvation among a people, who have not the means of providing for it themselves; making “the wilderness and the solitary place glad for them, and the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of

1206004

"good ; that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto
"Zion, Thy God reigneth !"

The passage of scripture which has been read, presents to us a striking view of the general design, and excellent nature of the gospel of our Lord. It is presumed that such a subject will not be inappropriate to the present occasion : for in proportion that we appreciate the worth of the blessings we enjoy ourselves, we shall experience the satisfaction, and discern the necessity of becoming the instruments in conveying them to others. " And, having made peace through
"the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things
"unto himself ; by him, I say, whether they be
"things in earth, or things in heaven."

In this verse, the blessed Jesus is introduced by the Apostle as an agent in negotiating the great concerns of *earth* and *heaven* ; and his cross, though a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Gentiles, as the powerful mean of advancing the highest interest of men and angels. For the information of the Colossians, to whom the Redeemer of mankind was, at this time, but little known, the text is preceded by the following sublime account of his personal qualifications and glory : " For by him were all
"things created that are in heaven, and that are in
"earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones,
"or dominions, or principalities, or powers ; all things
"were created by him, and for him : And he is before all things, and by him all things consist : And
"he is the head of the body, the church ; who is the
"beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all
"things he might have the pre-eminence : For it
"pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness
"dwell."

To the writings of many excellent commentators, as well as to the comparison which it is in your own power to make between these verses, and numerous others of like import, I must refer you for the meaning of the several parts of this illustrious description. The text immediately follows; "And having made peace," &c.

My particular endeavour, in the subsequent discourse, will be to engage your serious contemplation on the *peace* and *reconciliation*, which it appears the Father of our Lord has been pleased, through the blood of the cross, to introduce both in *this*, and in the *other* world.* It is to be remarked however that

* It is well known that *the things in heaven and the things in earth*, are understood, by some expositors, to mean the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the *former*, considered as exalted to *heaven* by the privileges they enjoyed; the *latter*, in a state of ignorance, senseless like the *earth*, until they were called by the gospel into an union with their brethren, through the common faith. The learned Mr. LOCKE, notwithstanding his opinion respecting several other texts, readily allows that by the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, or the things in heaven mentioned in the 16th verse of this chapter, and affirmed by the apostle to have been created by Christ, are signified the *good angels*, inhabiting heaven. Is it not reasonable, from the circumstance of the connexion, to infer that the *reconciliation*, expressed in the 20th verse, is as comprehensive as the *creation*? Let the several descriptions in the *Epistles* be compared, as to style, manner, and apparent design, with the first chapter in the *Gospel of John*, and it is presumed it will appear that by the *creation of all things in heaven and earth*, is designated something vastly more important than the mere act of breaking down the middle wall of partition between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, so making peace. On this subject see Dr. DODDRIDGE's Critical Notes and References in the Family Expositor; also the Notes of the ingenious Mr. JAMES PEIRCE.

when the Apostle speaks of the *Cross* of Christ, he undoubtedly means to embrace in his idea the whole series of the sufferings, especially the benignity and holiness by which they were sustained, and in a primary sense, may be said to have acquired their efficacy and success.

Allow me now to offer to you a few remarks, **FIRST** on the *nature* of the peace and reconciliation of which the Apostle treats in this chapter to the Colossians ; and **SECONDLY** on the glorious *effects*.

FIRST—It is obvious that the making *peace*, or procuring *reconciliation*, involves the concession of a pre-existing state of disorder and offence. This idea is conveyed not only in the text, but still more plainly in the Epistle to the Corinthians, in which we learn, that “ God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto “ himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” The disorder or offence is *sin*, introduced into the world by our first parents in the garden of Paradise, and pervading the hearts of their numerous descendants from that melancholy season, to the present day. It has shut the gates of Eden—nipped her fair fruits—blighted her aromatic flowers ;—and instead of angels with smiles of love, and accents of celestial joy, has “ placed cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” I cannot adequately describe it. It consists in contrariety to the nature ; opposition to the will ; and disaffection to the government of a perfect God. It has produced a kind of war between heaven and earth. God is angry with the wicked every day. The destruction of the antediluvian world—the ruin of Sodom and Gomorrah—the thunder, smoke and fire, with the voice

of the Almighty, when he bowed the heavens and came down on the mountain Sinai, are evidences of its evil nature. Contemplate also the present, as well as past disturbances in the natural world; the agonies, sicknesses, groans and death, to which as mortal beings we are continually liable;—these, in like manner, are the signals of the divine displeasure, under the pressure of which, we should sink *irrecoverably*, if *mercy* and *truth* had not met together in Jesus Christ, and *righteousness* and *peace* embraced each other.

Reconciliation implies agreement in sentiment and affection between the several parties which have been at variance. But whilst man continues to be a sinner, on supposition the divine law, by which he is thus characterized, be holy, the variance is to be considered intirely justifiable on the part of *God*. It is therefore on the part of *man* that the change of character essential to the proposed agreement, must exist. This is, when, through the word and Spirit, he exhibits the qualities of a true *penitent*, receiving the offer of forgiveness and of life, humbly, joyfully, and with a believing heart. The reconciliation will then become *mutual*. It is of some importance, in this place, to observe, that the same ideas must necessarily be entertained in the mind of God concerning the evil of sin, when he *pardons it*, as when *it exists in the first instance*. No alteration, in this respect, is ever possible with the divine Being. On any other supposition, our views of the *nature of pardon* must be intirely obscure. To the contemplation of the *sanctity* comprised in *forgiving love*, must be attributed the reciprocal enjoyment between the reconciled sinner, and his Maker:—For, as repentance cannot fail to involve the disapprobation of sin, the effect will be re-

alized not in the mere desire of emancipation from the condemning power of a perfect law, which even the impenitent might experience, but, as coexistent properties, and of much higher importance, in the admiration of the character of the legislator—the love of divine holiness—and the cordial acknowledgment that salvation is of pure grace through Jesus Christ.

This is the state of reconciliation which the Apostle, in the most striking manner, delineates in his address to the Corinthians, in which he says, “The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : And that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : Old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new : And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation : to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

Whoever pays the least attention to the gospel, must discover that its very genius consists in its aptness as a mean, to rescue the descendants of Adam from the fatal effects of sin, and illustrate the riches of redeeming love in their everlasting felicity. The sacred scriptures consider true religion or holiness,

whether applicable to the divine Being, or to his rational creatures as consisting in *love*. But of all the grades of this affection, the most exalted is *that* which extends to *enemies*. And the reason is, that the *purity* or *disinterestedness* of its nature, is more conspicuous and abundant. It is said that "scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man, some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were *sinners*, Christ died for us."

I have thus briefly considered the *nature* of the reconciliation of which the Apostle treats. A more extensive view will open when, as proposed in the SECOND PLACE, we consider its *effects*.

And FIRST, It is evident that among all the moral beings in the created system, there are none for whom the author has employed more attention, or whose future happiness he more earnestly seeks, than the *redeemed*, who are reconciled to him through his Son. The Apostles concur in their ideas of the gospel, as a display of divine wisdom, power, and love, *united*. This opinion is corroborated by the fact, that in the scheme of redemption by Christ, the character of the Father appears to be illustrated by means more *interesting*, *multiform*, and *comprehensive*, than apply to any manifestations, within our knowledge, of the divine *goodness merely*. To *one* who has been a *friend*, or *virtuous being*, it may in general be safe and expedient to do a kindness. But when it is done to an *enemy*, as the sinner may be viewed in relation to his God, it must be done *circumspectly*—it must be done *wisely*. In the former case, the process may be plain and easy. In the latter, preliminary considerations

may be needful. The rights of the divine government may require to be guarded—the laws honoured—religion exalted—and the obligation to the practice of holiness, with the inexcusableness of sin, exhibited by additional light. *Pardoning mercy*, as delineated in the gospel, is an exemplification of the character of a *righteous* God. It is dignified, as it is benignant—grand, whilst it is mild—embracing justice to created beings in general, as well as commiseration to offenders.

SECONDLY, There are many circumstances connected with the state of the *redeemed*, evincing an high capacity for the progression in knowledge, and the consequent attainment of the most exalted felicity. It was said by the *Tempter*, to EVE, that if she, and her husband, would take of the fruit prohibited by their Maker, they should be “as Gods, knowing good and “evil.” Without commenting on the particular meaning of this declaration, there is a general application in the present case, conspicuous and easy. Do not health, succeeding sickness—life, after the foreboding fears of death—and joy, in exchange for sorrow, receive a perceptible augmentation through the power of *contrast*? It is only to apply the principle—familiar in common concerns—to the subject of *religion*, and the doctrine must stand confessed. If the knowledge of *natural evil*, which the Christian endures in the present state, will confessedly enhance the enjoyment of the tranquillity in heaven, it is quite as reasonable to believe that the knowledge of *moral evil* may also contribute to the same end. Sin, when it is conquered—the circumstance of the conquest being essential to the argument—as well as affliction when it

is withdrawn, will necessarily give place to new faculties—assisting the mind in contemplation of the glorious objects to be disclosed to its view—adding reverence to delight, and holy wonder to grateful love. Like the dawn of morning after the gloomy shade ; or, as the light on the first day of the creation, dispelling the darkness from the face of the deep, so is the mercy of the Lord to the believer redeemed from iniquity ; entered by the recording angel in the book of life, and reconciled to God through the blood of the cross. It is a noble scene the Apostle introduces in the book of Revelation, in which the elders are beheld “ falling down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden viols full of “ odours, which are the prayers of saints, singing a “ *new song*, saying, Thou art worthy to take the “ book, and to open the seals thereof ; for thou wast “ slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

At a time when moral truth is investigated with the most critical eye, no preacher can expect, nor ought he to desire that any reliance should be placed on his own opinion, until reduced to the unerring standard of divine writ.

To the candid inquiry of this respectable audience, I therefore submit the present interesting subject—whilst, for believing the plan of man’s redemption to be so transcendently glorious among the works of God, I proceed to offer the following reasons :—

First, The being employed in negotiating this work, is no less than the only begotten and dearly beloved Son of God, by whom all the worlds were made ; who is before all things, and by whom all things consist,

Secondly, The pains and toils which this distinguished person endured in the execution of the work, augment our ideas of its importance. In the creation, preservation, and government of the world, astonishing power and wisdom are employed. There is nothing, however, in these exertions, but what is perfectly easy with the author. But in reconciling sinners to God, there must be labour, and suffering, yea *death*. And give me leave to add—this labour may, in a sense, be said to have embraced the mind even of the Father of our Lord. As Abraham consented to offer up Isaac, “God so loved the world that he gave “his only begotten Son” to die on the cross. If the good resulting from this event was so great as to absorb the idea of the evil, affording to the mind of the Father the enjoyment of infinite felicity on the whole—which we are bound to believe—it is notwithstanding true, that the great benevolence implied in the act, arises from the particular circumstance, that viewed abstractedly from the consequences, it must have been discordant to his parental affections, and in which it may be supposed, reluctance must have occupied his mind.

Thirdly, The interest which the glorious angels take in the work of man's redemption, is another evidence of its magnitude. They attended the Son of God when he was on earth, and are declared to be “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,”

Fourthly, The concern which it appears the other orders of intelligent beings will have with the judgment of mankind at the last day, is a further proof of the general importance of the christian system. As

both the good and bad angels have taken different parts in what relates to the Redeemer's kingdom—the one class, to promote, the other, to oppose its designs—it is intimated that at the close of human affairs and end of the world, they will appear, in the same assembly with men, in the presence of the Judge, for the revelation of the important decree—the public and final adjustment of their respective states.

Lastly, The similarity in nature between Jesus Christ and the redeemed, is also a proof of the great distinction he will confer on the heirs of salvation. "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." In this nature, he was personally acquainted with the wants of men; and by being tempted as they were, acquired a feeling for their infirmities, being himself also in the body. It is evident from the New Testament that the blessed Jesus will be recognised in heaven, as having once possessed humanity, and as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is great reason to believe there will be an external similitude between the Redeemer and his people, by which they will be distinguished as the head and members of the same body. I leave it with every candid reader of the Bible to determine, whether on the whole, there is not abundant evidence of a peculiar predilection for *the saints* in the divine counsels, admitting them to a very exalted state of communion with God and the Lamb. Take as an illustration of this sentiment the words of our Saviour the last evening he spent with his disciples, when he addressed his Father and said, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we

“are.” “Neither pray I for these alone, but for
 “them also which shall believe on me through their
 “word : That they all may be one, as thou Father
 “art in me, and I in thee ; that they also may be one
 “in us ; that the world may believe that thou hast
 “sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I
 “have given them ; that they may be one, even
 “as we are one : I in them, and thou in me, that they
 “may be made perfect in one, and that the world
 “may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved
 “them, as thou hast loved me.” To the same pur-
 pose are the words of the Apostle to the Ephesians—
 “That ye may know what is the hope of his calling,
 “and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance
 “in the saints : And what is the exceeding greatness
 “of his power to us-ward who believe, according to
 “the working of his mighty power, which he wrought
 “in Christ when he raised him from the dead ; and
 “set him at his own right hand in heavenly places ;
 “far above all principality, and power, and might, and
 “dominion, and every name that is named, not only in
 “this world but in that which is to come ; And hath
 “put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the
 “head over all things to the church, which is his
 “body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

Such then is the *nature*, and such are the vast *effects*
 of the reconciliation expressed in the text.

But I conceive there is contained a further idea.
 Though in a literal sense, it may be said that the act of
 reconciliation implies the making peace subsequent to
 a state of discord, it is not necessary to limit it to this
 meaning. The application to the things in *heaven* as
 well as the things in *earth*, leads us to conclude the in-

spirited writer comprehended in his mind the concerns of *both worlds*, which it was probably his design to represent as introduced through *Christ*, into a *general state of connexion*, or arranged, according to their respective conditions and dependencies, under *one perfect—uniform—or intire* system of government—corresponding with all the objects of the Father's will, and competent to the fullest illustration of the divine glory.

It is presumable there is no christian philosopher but must rejoice in the belief that *some* plan of divine government, in its nature completely glorious, wise, and good, must in reality exist—that whatever this may be, it must necessarily look beyond time into eternity—embrace all events—include all beings, and comprehend all worlds—that whilst the greatest display will ultimately be made through its instrumentality, of the *natural* but especially the *moral* perfections of its author, the object, on the whole, is the highest possible good of the vast system.* In this plan it

* That of all *possible* systems, the *best* is actually chosen by God, was long ago maintained with much learning by the celebrated LEIBNITZ, a German philosopher. It would be improper to discuss the subject with any minuteness in this place. To the works of this author, with those of Dr. CLARKE, and many other excellent divines of more modern date, there is an easy access. It is a pleasing observation that the most important truths in religion are generally the plainest. The doctrine to which this note has reference, is presumed to be of this description. To the learned and to the unlearned, the gospel is addressed. Suppose it to be said that of all *possible systems* the Almighty has *not* chosen the *best*: would not the unlearned reply—*It is impossible?*—Grateful and happy ought they to be, whose time, profession, and taste, admit the serious

may be concluded, there is a perfect *unity* of design, interwoven however with a vast *variety* of subordinate parts; and this *variety* among the parts, so admirably adjusted, as to display the greatest grandeur of the *unity*.

But not only is *a whole* composed commonly of its known *parts*: In most systems of government which are of human origin, and have been submitted to human observation, it has generally been conceded to be essential to their perfection, that—as in some magnificent edifice, or noble draught of nature—*among the parts*, there should be a *principal*—regulating their dependencies—governing their proportions—or directing their ends—and conspiring, through this relation, to set off to the best advantage, the *absolute beauty* of the original design.

And may not this doctrine apply with equal propriety to the *divine government*, as to *any other*? Is it not attested by sacred writ that the application in reality exists? And can we require more substantial evidence than is already furnished in the scriptures, that the *principal work* in the moral system, is the *redemption of mankind* through the Son of God, who, as Mediator, stands in a joint relation to *him* who sent him, and *those* to whom he was sent; and being the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person, may, in union with the saints, in whom also dwells *his* image, be considered, like the natural

investigation of these subjects; and notwithstanding the great pleasure and advantage derived from many other branches of science, find the chief relish in the knowledge of *divine truth*—the sublime study of *moral philosophy*.

sun to the earth and other planets, as a *glorious centre*, communicating life, light, and knowledge through the whole intelligent creation. If it has pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell, undoubtedly it was for the purpose of its communication. And by what method this communication is made, the Apostle asserts in his Epistle to the Ephesians, in which we read, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ: And to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church* the manifold wisdom of God; according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

From evidence so abundant, it is to be concluded that not only the *redeemed*, but also the *good angels* will be highly benefited by the plan of redemption. And if there are other orders of wise and good beings in the worlds above and around us—or if such orders should, at any future time, be called into existence, it may be apprehended that the contemplation of the great mystery of the cross, will form a part of their employment; and that the knowledge of God, will, in great measure, be communicated through their intercourse with the *redeemed*.† Even the punishment

* See Doddridge's Paraphrase on this verse, and the 18th and 19th following.

† That the various material systems throughout the universe are replenished with rational inhabitants, has often been

of fallen angels and impenitent men, may be presumed to bear a *real* though *subordinate* relation to the primary objects of the *mediation*; and including the circumstances of the comparative numbers of these unhappy beings, and the perpetuity of their punishment, must be viewed in the quality of partial evils, admitted for the sake of the general good.‡ If there were

supposed by Philosophers; and the opinion appears to be gaining ground. The sacred scriptures are silent on this subject. The remark in the preceding paragraph, includes no other than a supposition, for the sake of an inference—the application of which, to this part of the discourse, will readily be discerned by the reader.

‡ Allowing the expectation of a Millennium, or flourishing state of religion for a thousand years prior to the end of the world, there is no difficulty in concluding that the number of the redeemed will be vastly greater than of those who will be lost. When our Saviour remarked on the small proportion of persons walking in the path of life, he appears to have had reference to the age in which he lived, with other times not embracing any general prevalency of virtue, but much abounding in iniquity. The inquiry proposed by one of his followers, “Are there few that be saved,” is evidently founded on several parables he had just heard; in one of which, the divine teacher had compared the kingdom of heaven, or state of religion at that season, to a grain of mustard seed which is very small, but if put into the earth, becomes in the proper time, a great tree, admitting the fowls of heaven to lodge in its branches. They who hold to the doctrine of endless misery, and yet conceive that but *few* of the inhabitants of the world will finally be saved, must be reduced to the necessity of finding a competent number of subjects for future happiness from other systems than those to which their information, on this point, at present extends, or of yielding to very derogatory ideas on the nature of the divine perfections.—There are others who assert that the perpetual punishment of any number of moral beings, though comparatively small, would be intirely inconsistent with the attributes

a single event—at any time—among any beings—or in any world, incapable of subjection to the design of infinite benevolence, it would argue a defect in the general system. But taking all events collectively—with their various dependencies on each other, there can be *no defect*—but there will be reason through eternity for the saints and angels to unite in the anthem “Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

Thus I have offered to you a few thoughts respecting the peace and reconciliation procured through the cross of our blessed Lord; implying a state of love and harmony in the hearts of penitent sinners toward God; and also a design and tendency in the plan of

of their Maker. I ask, and why not their punishment for any limited time? On the same principle, is it not a blemish in the divine government for evil, of any description, to have been admitted into the system *at all*? That after a prescribed period, nothing should exist but perfect tranquillity and calm repose—no beings, except those who will be united in the same views, actions, and enjoyments, may at first thought appear desirable. Perhaps however—as in the *natural world*, where a certain degree of agitation is essential to the support of the elementary system—so, in the *moral constitution of things*, something of the same kind may always be required for the excitement of fresh vigour and attention—the renewed exhibitions of the divine holiness and power—and the general progression in the knowledge of God.—But can man prescribe to his Maker? With the imperfections annexed to his present state, is he able to fathom the deep counsels of Jehovah, and give rules for eternity? “To the law and to the testimony,” be the interesting appeal.

the divine government to promote the objects of infinite wisdom and benignity in the general system.

Before the discourse is closed, it may be proper, for a few moments, to advert to the fact of the approximation to that happy time, when in the course of divine providence, a glorious specimen will be given of the effects of this reconciliation, during the spiritual reign of the *Messiah* in the present world. For a long succession of ages, the church of Christ has been like a body of men travelling through a wilderness, encompassed with dangers. On numerous occasions it has indeed appeared in *majesty*—exhibiting proof, as the Jews in their journey between Egypt and Canaan, that its great Captain was its redeemer and friend. Notwithstanding the evils of many past ages, no less than of the present, a sacred voice has pronounced, and the harmonious accents may yet be heard, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” The various promises to the Jews on this subject, not only combine the event of their reformation, and acknowledgment of the *Messiah* whom their fathers slew, but probably of their return to their own country, and uninterrupted possession of Judea again. Their preservation as a distinct nation, notwithstanding their dispersion in all parts of the earth—their general expectation of the event—their disconnexion from all civil governments—the manner in which they hold

their property, which is chiefly personal, being a ready moveable, together with the present neglected state of their ancient country ;—these circumstances unitedly strengthen the expectation of the event, and render it an exhilarating object of the Christian's faith.

The conversion of the Jews, in the language of an inspired writer, will be as *life from the dead*, arousing the world from its spiritual slumbers—a prelude, it is probable, of the general reception of Christianity in all the nations on earth—when the standard of the Lord will be lifted up—the skies pour down righteousness—peace also will flow like a river, and all men know the Lord from the least to the greatest.

Though these events are in a state of postponement, the church is still the object of its heavenly Leader's care ; and members are continually added, of such as shall be saved. In our old settlements on this continent, and in the new—among the Aborigines, and the present occupants of the soil from which they have retired—in the polished cities and in the forests, new converts as well as established believers are constantly rejoicing in the doctrines of the cross.

To promote this work, my christian friends and brethren, we are convened at this time. The desire which is thus publicly expressed to extend the gospel to *others*, indicates of what importance we consider its application to *ourselves*. The observation, though trite, is interesting—*It is the best gift of God to man*. Reconciled by this gospel to the Being we have often offended, but who yet retains the relation of our Father in heaven—how vast our inheritance ! how boundless our views ! With the source of life and joy—the author of eternal blessedness, we

have, in this case, the same interest and delight. *His* cause may be considered as *our* cause; and the honour which will redound to him through all his mighty works, as the reward of our faith. Whilst the impenitent who indulge the relish for sin, have their only portion in themselves—renovated by the knowledge of celestial truth, our aspirations reach far beyond, and our treasure is already in heaven. In a sense, all beings are ours—all worlds our patrimony—all events subordinate to our best wishes; and time is constantly progressing to ennoble and replenish our immortal souls. “Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are ours, and we are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

But we are assembled in this house for the benefit of others, no less than our own. A voice addresses us from the inhabitants in the wilderness: The language is, “Come over, and help us.” The *Apostle* once heard it in a vision of the night, when the man of *Macedonia* stood before him, and implored his aid for the people then elected of God. *We* hear it in the wakeful hours of each returning day: With equal emphasis, it salutes our ears—on business of like importance, it applies to our understandings—and it is calculated, with similar energy, to command some of the best affections of our hearts.

This day a portion of our substance is to be offered in the sanctuary of the Lord. What is *earthly*, is thus to be consecrated to a *spiritual* service—to change its designation, from the purposes of the present life, to those of the life to come—to be acknowl-

edged as his property, and assigned to his use, who is able to sanctify the giver and the gift; that "both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified," may be one.

But what shall be the rule for our respective contributions on this occasion? Ask not the preacher. He is unable to inform you. Consider the value of the talents you have received yourselves. Let your inclinations be responsive to the wishes of the Redeemer. Meditate on the high nature of the service. A view to the honour of your Maker, and the eternal benefit of your fellow-men, will be sufficient to regulate your present offerings, and at the same time improve your own souls.

"To open the blind eyes—to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house—to bind up the broken-hearted—comfort them that mourn," and patronise the messengers of the *gospel reconciliation* among a people who are "in lack of knowledge;"—these are employments in which the seraphs, who stand before the throne on high, might desire to be engaged—but they are assigned to *you*. There will be joy in heaven, if you are instrumental in saving even *one soul* alive. The charity which results from the experimental acquaintance with the doctrine of reconciliation through the blood of the cross, will be registered above. Wherever you send the gospel, the action will be told for a memorial. Your reward will be commensurate with eternity, through Jesus Christ, who came to them who are *nigh, and afar*

off;—in whom we have the promise of redemption for ourselves, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and for as many as the Lord our God shall call to the obedience of the like precious faith.—To him be glory in the church, for ever and ever,

AMEN.



redemption.
t, and for
the obedi-
e glory in

A P P E N D I X.

AN ACT

To incorporate certain Persons, by the Name of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and others, in North America.

WHEREAS divers persons have petitioned this Court for an act of incorporation, whereby they may be the better enabled to carry into effect their design of propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and others in North America, and it is reasonable that the prayer of the said petition should be granted: Therefore, to promote and encourage the same,

I. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That Richard Cranch, of Braintree, Esq. Rev. John Clark, of Boston, Francis Dana, of Cambridge, Esq. Rev. Joseph Eckley, and John Eliot, of Boston, Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, of Franklin, Rev. Levi Frisbie, of Ipswich, Moses Gill, of Princetown, and William Hyslop, of Brookline, Esq's. Rev. Timothy Hilliard, of Cambridge, Jonathan Mason, of Boston, Esq. Rev. Phillips Payson, of Chelsea, Rev. Eliphalet Porter, and Increase Sumner, Esq. of Roxbury, Ebenezer Storer, Esq. Rev. Peter Thatcher, and Oliver Wendell, Esq. of Boston, Rev. Joseph Willard and Edward Wigglesworth, and Samuel Williams, Doctor of Laws, of Cambridge, and the Rev. Ebenezer Wight, of Boston, be, with such others as they shall elect, and they hereby are incorporated, and made a body politic, for the purpose aforesaid, by the name of *The Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and others, in North America*; and the Society aforesaid, shall have perpetual succession, and may have a common seal, which it shall be lawful for them to change, break, alter, and make new at pleasure, and may purchase and hold in succession, lands, tenements, and real estate of any kind, the annual income and profits whereof not to exceed the value of *two thousand pounds*. And the said*

Society is hereby enabled to take and receive subscriptions of charitably disposed persons, and may take any personal estate in succession; and all donations to the Society, either by subscriptions, legacy or otherwise, excepting such as may be differently appropriated by the donors, shall make a part of, or be put into the capital stock of the Society, which shall be put out on interest, on good security, or otherwise improved to the best advantage, and the income or profits applied to the purposes of propagating the gospel among the said Indians, in such manner as they shall judge most conducive to answer the design of their institution; and also among other people, who through poverty or other circumstances, are destitute of the means of religious instruction: And the said Society is hereby empowered to give such instructions, orders and encouragements to their officers, and those they shall employ, as they shall judge necessary; and the persons employed as teachers in any capacity, shall be men of the Protestant religion, of reputed piety, loyalty, prudence, knowledge and literature, and of other Christian and necessary qualifications suited to their respective stations.

II. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That* the said Society shall meet at some convenient place in the town of Boston, on the first Thursday of December next, and then choose a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, and such other officers as they shall judge proper, and may make by-laws and orders, for the regulation of the said Society; provided such by-laws and orders be not repugnant to the laws of the land, and act upon all matters which they apprehend needful, to promote the end of their institution: And the officers so chosen, shall continue in their office, until the Thursday next succeeding the last Wednesday of May next following the time of their appointment.

III. *And be it further enacted, That* there shall be a general meeting of the members of the said Society, at Boston, aforesaid, or in any other place within this Commonwealth, (unless some extraordinary occurrence prevent the same) on the Thursday aforesaid in May, and first Thursday of November, yearly, forever, and oftener if needful, when and where the said Society shall think fit; and any seven of the members (the President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary always to be one) being convened at the said times and places, are hereby declared to be a quorum of the said general meeting; and the said Society at their general meeting in May in every year (and in case of any extraordinary occurrence preventing

their meeting, then at their next general meeting after) shall out of their own body, by a majority of the members present, elect a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, and such other officers as they shall find needful, to continue in office until the May meeting next following their appointment, or until others be chosen to succeed them; and all the officers aforesaid, before they shall be qualified to act, shall be under oath, for the faithful performance of their respective trusts; and the said Society, at their first, or any other stated meeting (and at no other) may elect into their body, such persons as they shall judge qualified, to assist them in their good design; provided the whole number of the said Society, shall at no time exceed fifty members; and may appoint committees, to prosecute the orders of any general meeting, audit the Treasurer's accounts, and prepare matters for the Society to act upon; and such committees shall exhibit an account of their proceedings, at the general meetings of said Society.

IV. *And be it further enacted*, That the Society aforesaid, by the name aforesaid, shall be, and is hereby declared to be capable to prosecute, pursue, and defend, in all courts and places, and before all proper judges whatsoever, all actions, causes, processes and pleas, of what kind or nature soever, in the fullest and amplest manner; and if it shall happen that the said Society shall become seized of lands, or tenements by mortgage, as security for the payment of any debts, or by levying executions on lands for discharge of debts, due to the said Society, it shall be lawful for the said Society, by deed under the hand and seal of their President, for the time being, to sell and convey the lands acquired in either of the two mentioned ways; provided that no such sale shall be made, or concluded on, but at some general stated meeting.

V. *And be it further enacted*, That the said Society, be, and hereby is empowered, upon the death of their President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, or any other officer, to choose others at any stated general meeting, to succeed them; and may also remove any of their officers, when they shall judge expedient, and appoint others to succeed them therein. *Provided always*, That no member shall be removed, or officers displaced, unless at one of the stated general meetings as aforesaid.

And to the end, that the members of the said Society, and all contributors to the said design, may know the state of the Society's stock, and the dispositions of the profits thereof, and of all the donations made to the said Society:

VI. *Be it further enacted*, That a particular account of such stock and disposition, shall be exhibited by the Treasurer, at every stated general meeting; which accounts, the Secretary, or a committee of the said Society, (having examined the same) shall certify to be true; and fair entries shall be made in proper books, to be provided for that purpose, of all donations made to the said Society, and of all the estate, both real and personal, belonging to the Society, and of the incomes thereof, and also of all transactions, either by themselves, their officers, or committees, for, or on account of the said Society; and the said books shall be brought to the stated general meetings of the Society, and be there open for the perusal and examination of the members.

VII. *And it is further enacted*, That *Moses Gill*, Esq. be, and he hereby is authorized, by public notification, in *Adams and Noisre's* Independent Chronicle, to call the first meeting of the said Society, at such time and place, in the town of *Boston*, as he shall judge proper.

[This act passed November 19, 1787.]

RULES AND REGULATIONS

For the Government of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America.

Beside the choice of a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary required by Charter to be made on the Thursday succeeding the last Wednesday in May, annually, there shall be chosen at such time, a Vice Treasurer and Assistant Secretary; a Select Committee to consist of five persons, and a Committee of three to audit the Treasurer's accounts. Any extraordinary occurrence, however, preventing the choice on the said day, they may be chosen at the next stated meeting.

Of the President and Vice President.

1st. It shall be the duty of the President to preside in all meetings of the Society and of the Select Committee, to regu-

late the debates, to state and put all questions regularly made, to call for reports from committees or others, to keep the seal of the Society, and to attend to the execution of its laws and regulations.

2d. In case of the absence of the President at any of the meetings, the Vice President, if present, shall preside, and in case of the absence of both, any member present may be nominated and chosen for that purpose.

3d. The President shall, ex officio, belong to the Select Committee.

4th. In case of the death, resignation, or inability of the President, the powers and duties of the President shall devolve upon, and belong unto, the Vice President.

Of the Select Committee.

1st. The Select Committee shall from time to time consider of, prepare, and report such matters and things to the stated meetings, as they shall judge necessary to be laid before the Society; and in general such plans and measures, as they shall conceive best calculated for accomplishing the benevolent designs of the institution. This shall not, however, preclude any member from laying before, or proposing to the Society, any matter or thing, which he may think beneficial.

2d. The Select Committee shall give instructions to the missionaries, who may be employed; the same being conformable to the rules of the Society, or not repugnant thereto, examine their Journals, and make inquiry into the success of their missions, and all matters that concern the same, and make report from time to time to the Society.

3d. The Select Committee shall direct the Secretary in such correspondence, as they shall judge necessary.

4th. The Select Committee shall examine all accounts exhibited against the Society, and the same being certified, examined, approved and signed by the said Committee, or the major part of them, with an order thereon from the President or Vice President to the Treasurer, the same shall be a sufficient authority to the Treasurer for payment, agreeably to the appropriations and votes of the Society.

5th. The Select Committee shall hold a meeting, at least some time within a month before each stated meeting of the Society. The Secretary shall appoint and notify the time and place of such meeting, at least seven days previous thereto.

Of the Secretary.

1st. The Secretary shall have the charge of the statute and letterbooks, and of all letters, which letters shall be kept by him on regular file ; and he shall attend, if possible, all meetings of the Society and of the Select Committee, and at each meeting of the Society read the orders and entries of the preceding meeting, take notes of the orders and transactions of the present meeting, and enter the same in the books to which they respectively relate ; and shall, in like manner, note the doings of the Select Committee.

2d. The Secretary shall from time to time, lay before the Society such communications, as he shall have received, and such correspondencies as he shall have carried on under the direction of the Society, or the Select Committee.

3d. The Secretary shall record in a book to be kept for that purpose, or in some distinct part of his record book, all appropriations of money made by the Society ; all donations, by whom, and when specially appropriated ; to what uses ; all real and personal estate acquired by the Society, by purchase or otherwise ; and of all sales of real estate made by the Society ; which shall be laid before the Society at each meeting.

4th. In the absence of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary shall possess the same powers, and be charged with the same duties as the Secretary.

Of the Treasurer and Vice Treasurer.

1st. The Treasurer and Vice Treasurer shall give sufficient security, in the judgment of the Select Committee, for the trust reposed in them.

2d. The Treasurer shall receive officially all monies or sums of money due or payable, and all bequests and donations, that may be made to the Society, and improve the same to the best advantage of the Society, and in such manner, as he shall judge conducive to its benefit, except in cases where the mode of improvement shall be especially pointed out by the donor, or by the Society, or advice of the Select Committee, during any recess of the Society.

3d. The Treasurer shall pay such sums of money out of the Treasury as he shall have orders for, pursuant to the regulations and directions of the Society, and not otherwise.

4th. The Treasurer shall, in a book to be kept for that purpose, enter all the estate of the Society, both real and personal, specifying what is appropriated and what is not, and for what uses, if appropriated by the Society, or any donor.

5th. Previous to every stated meeting, the Treasurer's accounts shall be audited by the Committee for examining the Treasurer's accounts; in said Committee not more than one of the Select Committee shall be included.

6th. In case of the death, resignation, or removal of the Treasurer, the Vice Treasurer shall have full power and authority to receive all books, papers and effects, that were in the custody of the Treasurer, and which belong to the Society, and to give receipts and discharges for the same in the name of the Society, a duplicate of which shall be lodged with the Secretary. The same process shall be observed upon the choice of a new Treasurer and his acceptance of the office.

Of Meetings.

1st. Previous to each stated meeting of the Society, the Secretary shall give public notice in one or more of the Boston newspapers, at least fourteen days before such meeting, the President, or Vice President in his absence, directing time and place.

2d. Occasional meetings may be called, whenever the President, or in his absence the Vice President, shall direct the same, or at the request of the Select Committee, or when a request is signified in writing by any three of the members to the President; and such occasional meetings shall be notified by billets from the Secretary to each member, unless there be sufficient time to notify in some newspaper, and the Secretary shall think that mode best. He shall also notify the meetings of the Select Committee by billets.

3d. The Secretary shall seasonably, before each stated meeting, remind, by billets, the Committee for auditing the Treasurer's accounts of the business of their commission.

Of Missionaries.

1st. Missionaries shall be appointed by the Society at any stated meeting.

2. It shall be a standing instruction to the Missionaries to transmit to the President or Secretary, quarterly if practicable, a journal of their proceedings, which shall be laid before the Select Committee, and by them be communicated to the Society, in order that a true knowledge may be had of the state, circumstances and prospects of their respective missions.

3d. Missionaries may be suspended for neglect of duty, or any gross immorality, by order of the President with advice of

the Select Committee, during the recess of the Society : and at the next meeting of the Society such suspension may be taken off, or continued, as the Society shall think fit, and for like causes the Society may dismiss them.

Of Election of Members.

The choice of new members shall be by ballot. The candidate shall be proposed by some member or members of the Society, who shall lodge with the Secretary his or their proposal in writing, signed by him or them, inserting the town or place where the candidate lives, and his addition. At any stated meeting, the Secretary may declare the proposal, or at the next or any subsequent meeting, he may be balloted for. The votes of three fourths of the members present shall be necessary to constitute a choice.

The Society, the year past, have employed five Missionaries (beside giving the usual aid to the Rev. Messrs. Hawley of Marshpee, and Sergeant of Stockbridge, who labour among the Indians) viz.

Rev. Alexander Mc'Lean eight months, Rev. Daniel Oliver six months, Rev. Messrs. Piper and Stone three months each, and Rev. Edmund Eastman, two months, all in the District of Maine; and Mr. Lovejoy, who is stationed at the Isles of Shoals, and is partly supported by the Society, and partly by grants from the New Hampshire Legislature. It appears from the journals of these Missionaries, that they have laboured with various, and in some instances, with encouraging success.

Mr. Mc'Lean has for many years been a most faithful and a very acceptable Missionary in the service of the Society. His journals have been interesting and furnished much information for the direction of the Society in dispensing their charity.

Mr. Oliver, during the six months which he spent in the service of the Society, travelled about 1200 miles, preached 133 sermons, visited 196 families, and baptized 7 children. "The Society (he says) from many places, receive the hearty and affectionate thanks of the people for their kind and benevolent assistance in sending Missionaries and books among

"them," and speaks gratefully of the kind treatment he received from the people.

Rev. Mr. Stone, while on his Mission, preached 48 sermons, embodied a church at Temple, administered the Lord's supper once, and baptized 8 children. "There is (he says) a small Congregational Society in Litchfield, who have ever been destitute of a regular minister; but he it spoken to their praise, they have regularly, on Lord's days, for 25 years past, met for religious worship, and sung and prayed together, and a sermon has been read on these occasions. Books and sermons, suitable to be read in public, would be thankfully received from the Society, or from benevolent individuals."

Monies, to the amount of between two and three hundred dollars, were voted by the Society, to be put into the hands of the Missionaries, for the purpose of aiding in the establishment and support of schools, in districts, whose inhabitants were poor, and their children uneducated. The effects of this charity have been encouraging. Mr. Eastman, in a letter to the Secretary, writes thus—"In general my lectures have been full, and on the Sabbath, the assemblies have been much crowded. As to the schools, I am able to give you a very favourable and satisfactory account. Almost every town or plantation on which I bestowed *one month's* instruction last year, have themselves hired *two, three*, and in some instances *four months*, this year. Excited by the generosity of your Society, they are now in most of the towns and plantations doing to the extent of their ability; so that in some places, I had no room to bestow their bounty this year. To others, whom I believed to be truly needy, I have this year paid for instruction, agreeably to your order, *forty-five dollars*."

The sum of three hundred dollars was expended the last year in the purchase of Bibles, Testaments, Psalm-Books, Spelling-Books, and various religious books and tracts, a part of which have been already distributed, and the remainder, it is expected, will be taken by the Missionaries next spring. The accounts from all the Missionaries agree, that the harvest in this part of the Lord's vineyard is great, but faithful, discreet, and pious labourers are few.

From the Rev. Mr. Sergeant we have received the pleasing intelligence, that about one third part of the Oneida tribe, called the *Pagan party*, or *followers of the Prophet*, amounting to about 250, who live between Oneida and New Stockbridge,

were determined to join his congregation at the commencement of this year. He expresses strong hope, by the blessing of God, that the two parties (Pagan and Christian Indians) may be united, both in a civil and religious view. If these prospects are realized, it will rejoice the hearts of all, who wish well to the poor, benighted heathen of our country.

The speeches of the Pagan Chiefs, and the answers of the Stockbridge Indians, are interesting, and given, some of them, at length, in Mr. Sergeant's journal.

This accession will increase the labours of this pious and faithful Missionary, and at his advanced age, render necessary a colleague, to enable him to visit and instruct his flock in their families, a very important branch of ministerial, especially of a Missionary's duty.

The funds of the Society have remained, without any considerable alteration, for several years past. The amount of stock on interest, belonging to the Society, is \$22,407.22, the income of which is \$1174.43, \$491.09 of which, is appropriated by the donors to particular objects.

The liberal patronage, which the Honourable Legislature of the Commonwealth has bestowed on the Society, by their annual grants, for many years past, the Society have reason to believe has been employed for the lasting benefit of a needy and very deserving portion of its inhabitants; and so long, as it shall be thus bestowed, it is hoped it will be continued.

Donations to the Society.

Received by Rev. Mr. Stone, from the town of Temple,	\$20
From Mr. Johnson-	50
By Rev. Mr. Oliver, from the town of N. Yarmouth,	12
Pittston	18
Winthrop	11 4
	\$61 54

OFFICERS

Of the Society for the year ending May 1806.

Hon. James Sullivan, Esq. *President*,
 Hon. Oliver Wendell, Esq. *Vice President*,
 Ebenezer Storer, Esq. *Treasurer*,
 Rev. John Eliot, D. D. *Vice Treasurer*,

Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D. *Secretary*,
 Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D. *Assistant Secretary*,
 Rev. John Lathrop, D. D. }
 Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D. }
 William Phillips, Esq. } *Select Committee.*
 Mr. Samuel Salisbury,
 Hon. Dudley A. Tyng, Esq.
 Mr. James White,
 Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D. }

The following is a List of Members living, January 1st, 1806.

Rev. Thomas Barnard, D. D.
 Rev. Joshua Bates,
 Alden Bradford, Esq.
 Mr. Benjamin Bussey,
 Rev. William Channing,
 Hon. Richard Cranch,
 Hon. Francis Dana,
 Hon. John Davis,
 Hon. Thomas Dawes,
 Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D.
 Samuel Eliot, Esq.
 Rev. John Eliot, D. D.
 Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D.
 Rev. Levi Frisbie,
 David S. Greenough, Esq.
 Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D.
 Mr. David Hyslop,
 Rev. John Lathrop, D. D.
 Hon. Benjamin Lincoln,
 Rev. Joseph McKean, D. D. President of Bowdoin
 College,
 Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D.
 Samuel Parkman, Esq.
 Rev. Elijah Parish,
 Eliphalet Pearson, LL. D. Hancock Professor
 of the Hebrew and Oriental Languages, and the
 English Language,
 William Phillips, Esq.
 Rev. Eliphalet Porter,
 Daniel D. Rogers, Esq.
 Mr. Samuel Salisbury,
 Ebenezer Storer, Esq.
 Hon. James Sullivan, Esq.

Hon. John Traskwell, Esq.
 Hon. Cotton Tufts, Esq.
 Hon. Dudley A. Tyng, Esq.
 Mr. Samuel H. Walcott,
 Hon. Oliver Wendell, Esq.
 Rev. Samuel West, D.D.
 Mr. James White,
 Ebenezer Wight, Esq.
 Samuel Williams, LL.D.
 Mr. William Woodbridge.

Form of a Bequest or Legacy.

Item.—I give and bequeath the sum of _____ to
 the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and
 others in North America; to be applied either to the general
 objects of the Institution, or to such particular purposes, con-
 sistent with those objects, as the donor may think proper.

to

and
eral
on-